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AFGHAN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

DECEMBER 2013 – DECEMBER 2018

\$70 MILLION

OVERVIEW

The key to a strong democracy and transparent government is a robust media and civil society sector. The USAID Afghan Civic Engagement Program helps ensure that Afghan citizens are well-informed about the actions and performance of government institutions and officials and that they have the means to freely influence public policy and advocate for political reform.

The program aims to achieve its objectives by: (1) helping Civil Society Organizations (CSO) engage with government; (2) increasing CSO and media expertise in democracy and governance; (3) expanding civic engagement; (4) improving public access to independent news and public affairs information; and (5) increasing CSO organizational capacity.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- Ensure female civil society leaders and CSOs are involved in national policy development
- Support the national Emerging Civil Society Leaders program
- Provide media and CSO training and grants to support anti-corruption activities
- Train female CSO members in multi-media skills and journalism
- Promote women's voices through radio broadcasts
- Support Afghan lawyers to advocate for media laws and regulations as well as for freedom of expression

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Promoted political and civic engagement activities, reaching 351,099 Afghans (163,064 women)
- Awarded 85 grants worth \$4.9 million to Afghan CSOs and media for CSO institutional support, government monitoring, anti-corruption and advocacy, and women and youth empowerment activities
- Supported the launch of a Parliamentary Working Group on Elimination of Violence against Women (EVAW) Law, Family Law, and Civil Society Gender Working Group advocacy initiatives
- Formed advocacy group for CSOs to increase their involvement in budget monitoring
- Trained 56 community activists as civic educators in 24 provinces, providing 472 trainings on security, education, health and human rights, reaching 5,935 men and 4,964 women
- Trained 180 civil society representatives and journalists to utilize social media for civic engagement
- Developed the Afghanistan National Youth Policy to give youth a part in decision-making
- Trained 102 civil society activists in leadership, networking, communication, and gender advocacy
- Increased evidence-based advocacy research skills of 15 non-partner and 37 female-led CSOs
- Facilitated Organization Development (OD) for 12 key partner CSOs
- Trained 120 target CSOs on Community Participatory Learning for Action, Gender & Good Governance and Peace and Conflict Analysis
- Registered the Afghanistan Institute for Civil Societies (AICS) with the Ministry of Economy (MoEC) as an independent institute and commenced certification process for CSOs
- Trained 37 female journalists through the Young Journalists Internship Program and offered them job placement with different media organizations where they gained practical experience
- Facilitated participation of 669 women across Afghanistan in the Afghan Youth Voices Festival
- Trained 548 young women from Kandahar, Herat, Balkh, Nangarhar, and Kabul in multimedia use; trained 2,320 young Afghans across the country in basic multimedia skills, and provided a forum for thousands of young Afghans to express themselves through art, poetry, and new media through the Afghan Youth Voices Festival and through the Anaar Multimedia Centers
- Trained 2,195 media students and journalists from five provinces in basic journalism skills
- Broadcast 257 radio episodes of Negah-e-Naw, My Schools and Generation Hope programs, provided by Salam Watandar
- Led the national Media Moot Law Court Competition, which developed young lawyers' oratorical skills and culminated in a final competition featuring 68 students (7 women) from 10 universities

- Formed the Youth Empowerment Networks in provinces of Daikundi and Takhar to promote the culture of volunteerism in Afghanistan

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